The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Teach that which gives intelligence and skill, but forget not soul and culture.—Randall J. Condon.

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WHY AUTOCRACY OPPOSES TRADE UNIONISM

A refusal by employers to recognize trade unions is misunderstood by many people who point to organization in every other activity.

The mightiest industrial combines set prices and through various methods drive competitors out of business. This is defended as "the spirit of the age."

When the government calls on the Supreme Court to rule that the steel trust violates the anti-trust act, judges ignore law and wander into the economic field. They say an adverse decision "may be a serious detriment to the foreign trade."

These combines juggle credit and commodities, direct public opinion by manufactured falsehood, finance political parties, control nominations, "suggest" their attorney's for judicial place, and in other sinister ways strengthen their economic power.

These tremendous forces refuse to treat with collective labor. When workers would raise living standards and thereby advance, intellectually and morally, they are lectured on the value of "independence, liberty and private initiative."

The secret reason is the refusal of industrial autocrats to endanger their economic, intellectual and political control. They know, far better than unorganized employes, that economic control is the base of material and spiritual power.

The morality of this position is not considered—it is a question of "might makes right."

When wage workers are organized they do not limit their activities to higher wages and shorter hours. They challenge every wrong. They would annul privilege and establish equality in relations between men. They take their place as citizens of the Republic—they do their own thinking and act accordingly.

Through trade unionism the citizen-vision of wage workers is enlarged. It develops individuality, independence and capacity. This development is slow. It is lacking in the spectacular, but because of its slowness it is doubly certain.

The industrial autocrat is well aware of this development. He professes to be unacquainted with the philosophy of trade unionism, but his psychologists, economists and investigators keep him informed.

That he well knows the purpose of trade unionism is shown by his recent paternal ventures. In the hope of staying this development he grants the form but not the substance of labor's demands.

The so-called "open shop, the "American plan," "union" and the injunction process are all attempts to control the workers' lives by denying them the right to form trade unions and bargain collectively.

Free organization by the workers transcends all other questions. It is the tap root of workers' progress.

If workers are to be free they must have every right that the owner of capital enjoys.

The Mussolini ideal has no place in American institutions.

UNIONS ARE UPHELD BY FEDERAL SENATOR

Minneapolis, June 4.—"I know the benefits of organization because I belong to the dentists' organization and we work under strictly union conditions," said United States Senator Shipstead at one of the largest meetings of trade unionists held in this city.

Senator Shipstead referred to the anti-union drive which its advocates insist on calling "open" shop. This system, the speaker said, has been heralded as the handmaiden of prosperity. Instead, he said, it has bought poverty and business depression, and the wisest business men now realize that business prospers as workers prosper.

Senator Shipstead described conditions of the workers in Central American countries which he recently visited. He said these workers could him how they had pinned their hopes to this ruler and that ruler to find in most instances that the professed saviors assumed dictatorial powers and proved ruthless exploiters.

"The workers," said Senator Shipstead, "must depend upon themselves, and their unions have a function to perform which nothing else can serve as a substitute."

"LABOR" JUNKET TO RUSSIA WILL NOT REPRESENT LABOR

Washington, June 4.—A so-called "labor delegation which proposes to visit Russia and other European countries" has not been authorized to speak for American labor or for the A. F. of L., said President Green.

"It has been brought to the attention of A. F. of L. officers that plans to organize a group to be classified as a 'labor delegation' to visit these countries are being formulated by Albert Coyle, editor of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers' Journal, and others. Similar plans were drafted last summer, but were not carried out.

"It is stated that nine well-known trade union officials have already arranged with their organizations for leave of absence and will be ready to start the early part of this summer, and that a staff of expert economists will accompany the delegation. The names of the nine well-known trade union officials or the expert economists have not been made public.

"The last convention of the A. F. of L., held in Detroit, October, 1926, declared that 'the A. F. of L. not only cannot join in any mission to investigate conditions in Russia, but deems any such action unwholly unnecessary.'

"It further declared 'that no trade unionist should permit himself to participate in any such adventure.' This declaration was meant to apply to officers and members affiliated with the A. F. of L., and is expressive of the mature and deliberate opinion of the representatives of the A. F. of L., in convention assembled.

"We concede that individual members of organized labor and the representatives of labor organizations not affiliated with the A. F. of L. have the right to visit Russia or any other country for the purpose of making an investigation of economic and political conditions. In doing so they can only speak for themselves or for those groups which confer upon them the authority to represent them. But the officers of the A. F. of L. draw a distinction between a delegation speaking only for themselves or for special groups and a delegation classified as an 'American labor delegation,' speaking for American labor.

"It will be the purpose of the A. F. of L. to notify the officially organized labor organizations in European countries, in case Mr. Coyle and his associates consummate their plans to visit Russia, that they cannot be regarded as a labor delegation to speak for American labor and for the A. F. of L."

ANTI-UNION MINES LOSE SPECIAL RATE

Washington, June 4.—The Interstate Commerce Commission has granted a reduction in freight rates on coal moving from the unionized coal fields of Pennsylvania and Ohio to ports on the Great Lakes from where it is shipped to supply railroads and industries in the Middle West, Northwest and Canada.

This freight rate case has been one of the most bitterly contested fights ever waged before the commission and ends special privileges that have been enjoyed by non-union coal operators in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. These operators were permitted to carry coal through the union fields, hundreds of miles north of them, at a rather cost than the union fields. This privilege, together with low wage costs, paralyzed the union fields.

The non-union operators have expected that they could not maintain their privilege and have been quietly arranging to accomplish the same purpose by combining with southern railroads to secure lower freight rates and thus continue the present differential. The commission blocked this move by notifying the anti-unionists that their proposal will not be permitted.

The United Mine Workers made vigorous protests against the privileges enjoyed by southern coal owners who were given government aid in their union-wrecking policy.

The miners made such a clear case against these special rates that the Senate refused to confirm an appointee to the Interstate Commerce Commission who was an avowed friend of the anti-unionists.

LABOR PRODUCES MORE; HIGHER PAY NECESSARY

Washington, June 4.—Government departments are supplying labor with the best argument for a reduction in hours and higher wages.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau and the Federal Reserve Board agree that fewer persons are employed and that production has increased. It is shown that manufacturing industry employes 7 per cent fewer persons than after the war, and despite this reduction there has been a production gain of 5 per cent. Each wage earner, on the average, produces over a third more than seven years ago.

During this period the country's population has increased 9 per cent.

"In a country 9 per cent greater with 7 per cent fewer persons were producing 25 per cent more goods," says the Weekly Bulletin of the National Catholic Welfare Council.

"To keep American manufacturing industries operating, and to avoid depression, unemployment and an industrial crisis, large buying power is necessary among the masses of the people," the bulletin states. "Fewer manufacturing employes producing more goods requires higher wages among them so that they can do their part to avoid depression and unemployment by being able to buy up their share of the goods produced. High wages are a requirement of economic statesmanship to help America preserve the degree of prosperity it now enjoys."

"SCIENTIFIC" LAW FACES COURT ATTACK

Washington, June 4.—A New York firm has asked the United States Supreme Court to pass on the legality of the flexible tariff provisions of the Fordney-MacCumber Tariff Act of 1922.

Under this section the President has power to change tariff rates, pending amendation of a commission. When the act was approved it was haled as the last word in "scientific tariff legislation." Its friends insisted that costs of production here and abroad could be ascertained and tariff rates would then be adjusted to changing conditions.

The glowing predictions of friends of the act have not been verified. Opponents insist that the law is unconstitutional on the ground that Congress alone has the right to set tariff rates.

The act is the first of its kind in the history of this country.

DUFFY TO HEAD POTTERS

East Liverpool, Ohio, June 4.—By a referendum vote the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters elected James Duffy president. He succeeds President Wood, who has filled the office since 1921. The new executive is a brother of Attorney Thomas J. Duffy of Columbus, who was president of the Ohio Senate from 1903 to 1911, and who later served as chairman of the Ohio Industrial Commission.

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

Speaking before his puppet Chamber of Deputies, Mussolini referred to "the gradual creation of a directing class."

This term is more soothing than "ruling class" or Kaiser William's declaration that he is the direct representative of the Almighty.

Mussolini's objective, however, is the same.

PIG CENSUS WITHOUT COST

Postmaster General New orders rural mail carriers throughout the United States to take a census of the pigs along their routes. The information is wanted by the Department of Agriculture in compiling crop estimates.

But for the rural carriers this information could only be secured after an intricate and nation-wide machine were set up at a cost that no one can estimate.

But the census is taken within a few days without Uncle Sam spending one penny.

This is one of many duties performed by workers in the postal service for which no dollars-and-cents credit is given that department.

When these workers insist on higher wages or improved work conditions, the table pounders declare that the department must be operated on a "business basis," and that the income will not permit increases.

If the Post Office Department were a "business" institution, instead of devoted to social service, it would charge the Department of Agriculture a couple of million dollars for that pig census.

Longshoremen's Act Will Function; Federal Board Secures Needed Funds

Buffalo, N. Y., June 4.—The failure of Congress at its last session to provide funds for the functioning of the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Act, after passing it, will not cripple altogether the administration of this law, according to Anthony J. Chlopek, president of International Longshoremen's Association.

The act will be administered by the United States Employes' Compensation Commission. Mr. Chlopek reports that President Coolidge and General Lord of the Budget Commission have accepted the Compensation Commission's suggestion that the commission use funds appropriated to it for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1928, for putting into effect the law as far as possible.

The Commission will establish five deputy offices with the following jurisdictions: Cleveland, over the Great Lakes district; New York City, over the New England States; Baltimore, for that City; Philadelphia, over Hampton Roads and surrounding territory; New Orleans, over the South Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports; San Francisco, over Pacific Coast ports.

The commission is making every preparation to be in readiness when the law becomes effective, July 1, 1927. Under the act longshoremen and all repairmen, when injured aboard ship, will be entitled to the benefits provided in the Federal compensation law.

HIGH WAGES SYSTEM IS PROSPERITY BASE

Pittsburgh, June 4.—"It destroys prosperity to reduce wages. Some other methods should be used to reduce costs," said Secretary of Labor Davis in a speech before the Chamber of Commerce.

"If low wages made a country prosperous, China with its 400,000,000 people would be the most prosperous in the world today," said the cabinet member.

Secretary of the Treasury Mellon also declared for high wages through the elimination of waste, standardizing processes and by the use of labor-saving machinery and new inventions.

Secretary Davis made an indirect reference to the bituminous coal strike when he declared that the coal industry "is 50 years behind the times."

"It is subject to frequent strikes and to cut-throat competition," he said. "It is subject to fluctuation of price and to stoppage of production that keeps the country in constant suspense and slows up other industries. The contrast between that industry and the other great modern industrial institutions we have is a tribute to those pioneers who developed the principle of organization and first put it into practice.

"I hope that as each of the other major industries has developed its genius, so also the basic industry of coal will find among its leaders one man who will bring system and order into its operation."

HENRY SKEFFINGTON DEAD

Boston, June 4.—Henry J. Skeffington, veteran trade unionist of the old school, died at Revere, near here. He represented the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union at many conventions of the A. F. of L. a generation ago. He was appointed by President Wilson to the Commissioner of Immigration of the Port of Boston. During the War Mr. Skeffington many industrial disputes as Commissioner of Conciliation for the United States Department of Labor.

STATE UNIONS TO MEET

Parkersburg, W. Va., June 4.—The annual convention of the West Virginia State Federation of Labor will be held in this city beginning Monday, August 22.

MINERS IN KENTUCKY DENIED PROTECTION

Harlan, Ky., June 4.—Union miners have petitioned the governor to investigate Sheriff Ward of this county, who has been encouraging lynch methods to aid anti-union coal operators.

The miners submit affidavits which declare that Ward ordered representatives of the miners to leave this county or that "they are causing agitation and he isn't going to stand for it."

When the miners told the sheriff their lives were threatened, and asked him if he would give them the protection that the law provides, he answered "No."

"Do you tell us that our lives are in danger and that you will not give us any protection?" they asked. The reply of this "peace" officer was an emphatic "Yes."

The miners were unorganized, but continued wage reductions the past two years developed a union sentiment. The United Mine Workers responded to appeals for aid, but Sheriff Ward is assisting coal operators' thugs in attempting to scare the unionists out of this district.

Lawyers employed by other representatives of the United Mine Workers have notified the sheriff that they will not "take the first train out of town." Instead, they advertised a mass meeting, which was the largest ever held in this section.

MUSSOLINI SHOWS HIS HAND; WILL RULE ITALY FOR LIFE

Rome, Italy, June 4.—Mussolini has acknowledged that he intends to be Italy's dictator for life, although he assured the Italian people his tenure of office was temporary when he seized the government.

In a speech in the Chamber of Deputies last week, he said:

"I am convinced that, despite the gradual creation of a directing class, despite the discipline of the people, I must assume the task of governing the Italian people for 10 or 15 years more."

Last the people consider this a pledge that Mussolini will retire in "10 or 15 years more," he said: "My successor is not born yet."

Declaring that Italy must be able to make her voice heard and her rights recognized some time between 1935 and 1940, Mussolini declared for a strong navy, a huge air force and an army of 5,000,000 men.

Three great tasks lie immediately ahead, he said—perfecting the military forces, reform of constitutional machinery and continuance of the struggle for economic and financial rehabilitation.

This means a huge war machine, destruction of popular government and the continuance of trade union repression and compulsory arbitration.

"Today, May 26," exclaimed the dictator, "we bury solemnly all the lies of universal democratic suffrage."

EMPLOYERS DREAM OF GOLDEN DAYS WANT LABOR TO YIELD WAR PROFIT

New York, June 4.—In the hope that they can re-establish war profits, Massachusetts textile manufacturers claim that the 48-hour week and "high" labor costs are driving cotton mills from the north, declares says the Textile Worker, official magazine of the United Workers of America.

This labor magazine proves by statistics that workers are producing more than before the war at a lower cost per unit. In 1914 the loom weaver operated from 2 to 12 looms for from $8 to $12 for a 54-hour week. The weaver now operates from 6 to 48 looms, and in some instances 64, for $16 to $28 for a 48-hour week. He produces from 75 per cent to 500 per cent more in 1927 than in 1914 at from 50 to 100 per cent more cost for labor, but the yard or pound cost is lower when the difference in unit production is considered.

"In view of these facts," says the Textile Worker, "some of our cotton employers are using every means, fair and foul, to restore the 54-hour week. All benefits accruing from improvements on mill machinery go to the manufacturers. Ours is the only industry where this practice is maintained.

"The textile manufacturer who advocates long hours is generally the incompetent and inefficient. War profits are his dream. Reducing wages is his hobby. War-time overhead expense is maintained and the horde of misfits he took under his wing during war days are on his pay roll. There they must remain because he gave his word in the lodge room or in the sanctum of some politician that those recommended would have jobs in perpetuity.

"Those were the days when excess profits could be fixed so as to make gifts to friends with a pull. This plan reduced excess profits' reports to the government and at the same time made them solid with their political and lodge associates.

"Everybody paid but the profiteer and now the profiteers are hollowing for public sympathy."

"PRODUCE LESS OIL," IS OIL CZAR'S ORDER

New York, June 4.—Confident that their oil dictatorship in the Oklahoma fields will not be challenged by the government, operators have decided to continue placing the limitation of drilling in the hands of one man. This was agreed to at a meeting in the offices of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

Conferences have been held with government officials and the Federal Oil Conservation Board. These officials express an interest in "protecting" the industry, and the operators consider this as sufficient evidence that they will not be attacked under the anti-trust laws because of their attempts to slow down production.

It is the first time in the history of this country that a basic industry has established a dictator who will set production that the market may be upheld. It is believed that the plan will be extended to other fields, but the operators are moving slowly that a popular antagonism is not developed.

IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA INCREASE UNEMPLOYMENT

Edmonton, Alberta, June 4.—The government's policy of "dumping" immigrants into Canada is opposed by organized labor. The workers insist that present conditions will be intensified next winter, when unemployment is acute.

Business interests are defending the so-called "colonization" system, but the workers refer to the long lines of idle and destitute job seekers in Northwest cities.

The immigrants are not being employed on farms. They are unacquainted with land and they are unacquainted with modern farm methods. Some of them are employed on railroad section gangs at low wages, but this is summer employment.

GOVERNOR WILL DECIDE SACCO–VANZETTI CASE

Boston, June 4.—Governor Fuller of Massachusetts has informed friends of Sacco and Vanzetti that he will not create a commission to review that case. He says the law places the responsibility on him.

The governor is considering the trial and evidence that has developed since that time.

EXPELLED FROM UNION; CAN'T COLLECT DAMAGES

Denver, June 4.

A JURY in a local court has decided that damages cannot be collected from the Carpenters' Union by an expelled member. He assisted in organizing a secession movement, and when ousted from the union sued for $20,000 damages. He claimed his "reputation" had been impaired and that he is unable to secure work since the expulsion.

Similar suits against the union are pending, but in view of the first decision, the outcome is certain.

URGE CHILD LABOR BAN

Sedalia, Mo., June 4.—The Federal Child Labor amendment was again indorsed by the annual convention of the Missouri State Federation of Labor. The legislative committee was instructed to conduct an educational campaign for the measure.

President Green of the A. F. of L. was thanked for his efforts in behalf of the workmen's compensation law, passed by the State legislature.

Injunction Only Applies to Labor; Other Citizens Are Always Immune

Organized labor seeks no immunity from the law, but insists that that which is lawful when done by other persons shall not be regarded as unlawful when done by wage earners, either as individuals or in association.

We demand that the common law practice shall apply to wage earners as well as to all others; that is, that no injunction shall be issued wherever there is another remedy provided by law.

Our fellow workers or our movement are not law breakers; but if any one be guilty of a crime, the law provides for his apprehension, trial and punishment.

There never yet has been issued an injunction prohibiting a crime. The injunction in a labor dispute is devised to accomplish that for which there is no law, to prevent the doing of that which is no crime. Its purpose is to interfere with wage earners exercising legal and moral rights.

OVERTIME IS OPPOSED BY TRADE UNIONISTS

Middletown, Ohio, June 4.—"Don't accuse the worker of seeking overtime at excess prices when he demands the five-day week," writes John Donlin, editor of the Plasterer and former president of the A. F. of L. Building Trades Department.

Mr. Donlin points out that workers' agreements are always against overtime work, but the words "except in emergency" are added by employers and interpreted according to their interest.

"The workers who favor strict adherence to standard wages and standard hours, with no overtime, are overwhelmingly in the majority," said Mr. Donlin.

PICKET RIGHT UPHELD; POLICE HEAD REBUFFED

Pawtucket, R. I., June 4.—Textile workers on strike against the Manville-Jenckes Company have been sustained in their right to picket.

The strike started more than three months ago when the company attempted to increase the week from 48 to 54 hours.

Chief of Police Coe arrested the pickets. He posed as a judge of the strike and said there was no excuse for its existence. After 50 strikers were arrested the court dismissed all cases.

WIRE MEN STRIKE

Oklahoma City, June 4.—Organized electrical workers refuse to work under anti-union conditions. The Chamber of Commerce has been aiding the employers, who asked for an injunction, despite a State law which prohibits these write in industrial disputes.

ROD CARRIERS UNITE

Enid, Okla., June 4.—Local rod carriers here have been organized by President Campbell of the Oklahoma State Federation of Labor.

PAN-AMERICAN MEET CONVENES IN JULY

Washington, June 4.—The A. F. of L. will be represented at the forthcoming congress of the Pan-American Federation of Labor, to be held in this city beginning July 18, by President Green, Secretary Morrison and Vice Presidents Matthew Woll, James Noonan and James Wilson.

"The congress will be the largest and undoubtedly the most important yet held, due largely to the lack of international relations the past year," said Santiago Iglesias, secretary of the Pan-American Federation of Labor before represented will have delegates. Those who have thus far notified headquarters here of their intention to send delegates are: United States, Mexico, Argentina, Cuba, Santo Domingo, Venezuela, Colombia and Puerto Rico.

"Peru, Bolivia, Panama, Guatemala and Honduras are endeavoring to send delegates, while Chile, Salvador are prevented by difficulties in that country.

"That there will be rival delegations from any country is unlikely. This is true of Cuba and the same may be true of Nicaragua."

EIGHT-HOUR VIOLATION BRINGS RECORD PENALTY

San Diego, Cal., June 4.—Charles E. Green, public works contractor, was fined $13,110 for 1,311 specific violations of the eight-hour law. The action was brought by State Labor Commissioner Mathewson. Green forced employes to work nine to eighteen hour days.

The fines are said to be the largest ever assessed against a public works contractor in this State.

OLD-TIME UNIONIST DIES

Chicago, June 4.—Charles D. Wheeler, pioneer trade unionist, died in this city. He was 82 years old, and crowded his activities but less than a year and one-half ago. He was the first International president of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union, which preceded the present Sheet Metal Workers' International Association.

CONNECTICUT'S ILLITERATE ALIENS LEAD NATION

New York, June 4.—Connecticut, the home of many educational institutions, is flayed for its illiteracy by Dr. Winthrop Talbot, educator and social investigator, writing in a financial magazine.

Dr. Talbot says Connecticut is the only State in the Union where illiteracy is increasing, in proportion to its population. It is shown that ignorance in this State is increasing faster than filled with unorganized foreigners, is startling.

The United States Census Bureau defines as illiterate any person over 10 years of age who cannot read or write his name, irrespective of language. In Connecticut, according to Dr. Talbot, there are 67,265 persons 10 years of age or over who are illiterate in this sense. Eight in every hundred adults are unable to write their names. Over one-fourth of the adult population cannot read English with any facility. Derby is the most illiterate town in the State. The percentage is 19.5. This means that one person in every five in that town is unable to write his name. It is significant that Derby has the highest mortality rate in the State.

"The problem of adult illiteracy is mainly a problem in industrial employment and industrial relations," declared Dr. Talbot. "It can be handled effectively only by wiser methods of industrial management. Ignorant labor is costly labor, for low wages and illiteracy are more than offset by increased production expense. Ignorance through inability to read is an important contributory factor in disease, accident and higher mortality.

"Connecticut has always prided itself upon its educational standards, therefore it comes as a shock to realize actual conditions regarding illiteracy in the State. It is evident that not only the number are increasing rapidly, but also that the percentage of illiteracy is increasing. In fact, Connecticut is the only State in the Union where the percentage of illiterates to the total population is increasing.

"So-called restrictive immigration laws are leading many to believe that we enjoy a sense of security not justified by facts. The net immigration to Connecticut from 1910 to 1920 was approximately 104,000, which includes the great tidal waves of aliens that occurred in 1913 and 1914. In spite of restrictions Connecticut has already received over 45,000 aliens during the past six years, and by 1930 will have received 65,000, or two-thirds of the preceding decade. We must expect, therefore, not only an increase in the number of foreign born by 1930, but also a considerable increase in the number of illiterates.

"Many employers feel that cheap labor in large quantities is essential and illiterate labor is cheap, but this attitude is out of date, although common enough still.

"Cost accounting has driven a knockout to such worn out ideas. All progressive concerns have come to realize that wages is only one element of cost and that generally speaking, low-paid employes are costly. The lower the wage the lower the grade of mentality as a rule and consequently of intelligence pays. Our prosperity as a nation is based upon intelligence and efficiency.

"America has long since learned its costly lesson that slave labor does not pay. The equivalent of a slave in chains of ignorance. He is more liable to accident and disease. He learns more slowly, requires more supervision and instruction, and is easily swayed by unscrupulous outsiders. The comparatively slight saving in wage payments to ignorant laborers is more than offset by increased expense for accidents, illness, mistakes, misunderstandings, spoiled material, friction, irritation and that slowing down of production that goes with low intelligence."